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SOUTH ASIA: New Delhi reportedly is turning over some of its prisoners to the Bangladesh government for war crimes trials.

A UN representative in Dacca has been informed by the Chief of Indian mission that former East Pakistan Governor Malik and other Bengali prisoners were handed over to the Bangladesh regime on 31 January for prosecution on war crimes charges. New Delhi had advised the UN Secretary General last month that it regarded the Dacca government as having the right to try accused war criminals. Bangladesh authorities already are planning trials for the hundreds of accused collaborators they themselves have arrested.

Bengalis such as Malik who helped Islamabad administer East Pakistan would be the most likely persons to be turned over by India, but some West Pakistanis who held civilian posts in the East--and even some selected military figures accused of war crimes--might also be transferred. Should India hand over more prisoners, particularly West Pakistanis, reprisals might be triggered in West Pakistan against the estimated 400,000 Bengalis who live there. Prospects for Indo-Pakistani peace talks could also suffer because Pakistani President Bhutto might feel compelled to revert to a hard-line policy toward India.

A delay in getting talks started would be less damaging to India than to Pakistan; India holds about 90,000 Pakistani prisoners, compared to only a few hundred Indian soldiers in Pakistani custody, and the Indians also hold a greater amount of enemy territory in the India - West Pakistan border region.

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INDIA: Repatriation of refugees to Bangladesh is proceeding smoothly and rapidly.

Six million refugees or about 60 percent of the total have returned home since the Indo-Pakistani war ended in mid-December. New Delhi is strongly encouraging repatriation and most refugees, both Hindu and Moslem, are willing to return home soon. Those returning have proven exceptionally resourceful in rebuilding bamboo houses and resettling quickly into normal village life. Concern is mounting, however, over the lack of organized food, medical, and other assistance programs within Bangladesh.

India has assumed the bulk of refugee costs, including repatriation. Only \$220 million in foreign economic assistance has been pledged thus far. New Delhi estimates that by the end of March direct costs will have increased from \$320 million at the end of December to about \$475 million. Some \$60 million is needed for refugees in camps and an estimated \$95 million for refugee rehabilitation, including costs incurred within Bangladesh. To cover some of these expenses, New Delhi recently granted Bangladesh \$6.7 million worth of foodgrains for refugee rations, and \$24.7 million in rupees for cash payments to those returning.

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JORDAN: King Husayn has been considering cabinet changes and may be close to a decision. The strongest of the many rumors in official circles in Amman is that he will retain Prime Minister Lawzi for the time being but intends eventually to replace him, perhaps with Ambassador to London Zaid Rifai, who formerly served as palace secretary. Although the King himself makes all the important decisions in Amman, he has been trying for some time to find the right combination of younger, more vigorous officials who can deal imaginatively and effectively with the country's domestic problems. To some extent this process was begun under the late Wasfi Tal, but Tal's difficulties with the fedayeen and with Egypt overshadowed his efforts to reorganize and invigorate the bureaucracy.

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MALAGASY REPUBLIC: President Philibert Tsiranana's re-election last Sunday by a near unanimous vote clears the way for reorganization of his cabinet. Tsiranana may now be more vigorous in carrying out promised purges in the ranks of his dominant Social Democratic Party designed to root out all persons suspected of disloyalty. The President is also expected to accelerate legal proceedings in three cases of alleged subversion now under investigation, including that of former vice president Andre Resampa, who was arrested last June on charges of coup plotting. Resampa's trial may finally surface the "irrefutable evidence" Tsiranana claims to possess proving US collusion in the plot.

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SWITZERLAND: Last year's trade deficit was a record \$1.6 billion, nearly double the average deficit of recent years. The Swiss trade position began to deteriorate in 1969 as manufacturers approaching capacity levels of operation sharply increased imports in an effort to modernize production facilities. Slower economic growth among Switzerland's major trading partners and the revaluation of the Swiss franc probably will retard export growth in 1972. This will contribute to a further slowing of Swiss economic growth and restrain imports. Thus, the trade deficit is unlikely to grow substantially.

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